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Maybe Our 'Community' Needs Renewal

No Buildup In Cuba... Or No Intelligence?

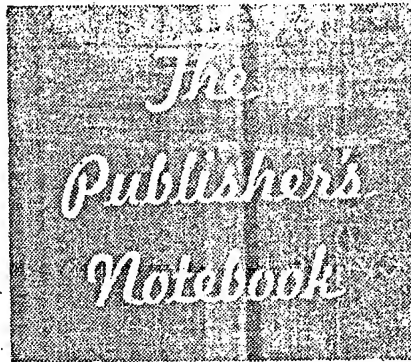
Views On The News:

LAST WEEK, I stated here that Soviet military strength in Cuba "is still very formidable."

Mentioned were 42 high performance jet fighters, heavy and medium tanks, anti-tank guns, field artillery pieces, rocket launchers and a minimum of 17,500 military personnel.

But, at the President's news conference on Wednesday last, this colloquy took place: Q. — Mr. President, there's still a lot of discussion in the Congress — Senator Lausche among others — on the increasing buildup militarily of Cuba. Is there anything you can say that would be in any way encouraging about the removal of Russian troops, or of the military situation in Cuba?

A. — We do not have any evidence of increasing military buildup by the Soviet Union. I think at previous press conferences I've given an answer to the question of how many Russians were there, and the comment in regard to the withdrawal of Soviet troops. There has not been a satisfactory withdrawal as yet. But we have no evidence that there is a



community" which, notwithstanding human-source reports, could not identify the presence in Cuba of Russian-organized ground combat forces until October 25 although some of them had been there since last July.

The preparedness investigating subcommittee of the Senate exonerates the "intelligence community" of the charge that a gap existed in our photographic reconnaissance over Cuba from September 5 to October 14.

But the committee does say "the deficiency in the performance of the intelligence community appears to have been in the evaluation and assessment of the accumulated data. Moreover, there seems to have been a disinclination on the part of the

the intelligence chiefs acknowledge that they were misled and deceived. The intelligence people now say that all strategic missiles and offensive-weapon systems have been removed. The committee cannot reach a conclusion on this because "of lack of conclusive evidence."

Actually, it will never be known how many weapons are hidden in Cuba without on-site inspection, an early Kennedy objective now forgotten.

So when the President tells the nation that our intelligence community "has found no evidence of a military build-up in Cuba," we can well ask on the basis of the past record, "How reliable is the information?"

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And Non-Partisan

I BELIEVE the Senate subcommittee, with Senator John Stennis as chairman, has performed an invaluable service for the country by revealing that — as in the days before Castro — our intelligence evaluations are too often influenced by the philosophical leanings of the evaluators.

It is significant, too, that the full report was unanimously approved by Chairman Stennis and the full sub-